

~~SECRET~~

Subject: NESELSKY Valentin, Soviet Exchange Student at Columbia

Source: ☐ ☐

Date: 6 Apr 1965

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B  
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
DATE 2007

1. After two or three casual meetings at Columbia, mid-Mar 1965 Source invited Subject to his department at the International House. Source played the role of a typical American student with rather cosmopolitan somewhat leftist inclinations, of Slavic descent and interest in Eastern Europe but with no political emigre affiliations.

Subject told him he was Russian, his mother was Ukrainian from Donbass, he stemmed from NOVOSIBIRSK, was member of the CPSU, married, had two children - boys aged 5 and 2, his wife was employed with a state publishing house.

Subject seemed to be "quite tolerant in nationalities problems", anyway he was not a Russian chauvinist, and did not identify "Soviet" with "Russian".

During the conversation at Source's house, after having met a bit, he pretended to be even a non-conformist and quite liberal as for his kind of people. Thus, he likes jazz though many people in the Soviet Union cannot even understand and appreciate it. The same occurs to modern art. There is however a genuine explanation for it. i.e. "Zhdanovshchina". It washed up to a great extent Soviet minds and the Soviet masses have still a long way to go to catch up with modern art and music. But things are better and better and they can make three steps at once.

Subject also does not fully approve of latest degrading of Khrushchev and Adzubei. The latter was a nice guy and no one can deny the role of Khrushchev in demoting the personality cult and advancing the destalinization. Khrushchev introduced not only basic changes in the entire Soviet system but he also "showed the Soviet masses a new style in everything". Thus when Nikita Sergeevich came for the first time to Novosibirsk after Stalin's death in 1953 the people were surprised to see him there walking around, talking to

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The people were not used to such<sup>a</sup> behaviour of their leader and were quite puzzled by it. But after a while they "de-freezed" and enjoyed tremendously the new situation. In Subject's opinion, Khrushchev was really popular and "knew how to do it."

As to the new leadership - it's too early to say anything definite. So far there were no spectacular successes. When Source remarked that Brezhnev and Kosygin seemed to him to be more of apparatchik's type, Subject did not deny.

Subject believes the United States is the most advanced country in the world but he also firmly believes that the Soviet Union will catch up with the US in 15 years. He had also some criticism about the United States in store, namely that there was no guarantee of jobs for graduate students and high percentage of unemployment.

Stalin was a very bad man and should have died in 1930's before he was given the chance to "devastate the party and the people".

Subject still hoped that Adzubei will one day return to "proper position". He showed great sympathy and respect for him.

In Subject's opinion SHELEPIN is a very powerful man now but he did not think he will rise any higher. He mentioned that he met SHELEPIN personally.

Subject stated quite firmly that there should be no doubt whatsoever that the real government of the Soviet Union was the Central Committee of the CPSU and its Presidium. He also mentioned that all important moreover drastic changes are being told the rank and file by special "letters" not available to everybody.

Subject shows no particular interest in literature. Source showed him quite a few books but he was not interested in them. Also when shown a book on literature by Koshelivets published by Prolog, Subject only nodded with his head as though he knew it.

Subject mentioned that he had travelled in Europe before and said he

had been to Austria. ( He said it in such a way as to imply that he went to the youth festival in 1959. ) In 1956 Subject had some important function at the Youth Festival in Moscow.

2. According to Subject he was told in Moscow prior to his departure for New York that he will probably meet some emigres and they will try to ~~convince~~ to change his mind by pointing out to Soviet shortages and negatives in general. He added that some time ago he met a Ukrainian student in New York who indeed try to indoctrinate him. Among other things he told him that Ukraine could be both - communist and independent and in Subject's view this was impossible because the Ukraine was a vital part of the entire Soviet Union. He did not think however that the student was a bourgeois nationalist. In general, in the beginning - as Subject put it - he regarded the emigres to be just a bunch of rowdies but now he would rather consider them as people who left the Soviet Union <sup>because they</sup> ~~and~~ disagreed with Soviet political and economic system. Therefore he could not condemn those people just for that.

3. Subject did not approve of Chinese policy and called <sup>it</sup> warmongering. He was also mad at the fact that leaders of CP in Belgium and other Western countries rode around in expensive cars while the rank and file had to keep up the proletarian image. There was definitely something wrong about it. But on the other hand he considered as natural that all the initiative in party policy should come only from above. Subject had also some other critical remarks for Western CPs, of more fundamental character. He did not approve, for instance, of the fact that the French CP on the one hand follows Marx and Engels in political and economical spheres and on the other - <sup>of the</sup> rejects the Marxist teaching on atheism.

4. According to Subject the agriculture was always in a mess in the Soviet Union. And it is in the same state at the present. Khrushchev tried to

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improve it but failed. However he atleast took the blame for it on himself. (For this he liked Khrushchev.) What will be the result of latest reforms it's difficult to say. One should not expect any startling successes soon , anyway.

5. Anti-semitism in the Soviet is very strong - according to Subject. In his opinion there is a logical explanation for that since Jews as middle -men and speculators cannot count on sympathy on the part of the rest of population.

6. When Subject came to Source's apartment he brought with him a bottle of Stolychnaya. He made a comment that this vodka in the Soviet Union was only for intelligentsia and the common people did not drink this brand. Subject made actually quite often the distinction between intelligentsia and masses in reference to art, music, literature, and cloth.

Source did not press Subject in any way and he seemed to enjoy it. He also promised to come again "for borshch". ( Source's wife is Belgian but she knows how to make borshch.)